

What is Blue Zones?

Blue Zones uses over 20 years of research and scientifically proven lessons of longevity, health, and happiness from the longest-lived cultures in the world to transform community environments so healthy choices are the easiest to make. We have a proven history of improving well-being for entire populations.



To boost the well-being of entire communities, we take a systems approach to making lasting changes in all the places and spaces people live, work, learn, and play. These changes to our surroundings and systems collectively nudge people to [move naturally](#), [eat wisely](#), [develop the right outlook](#), and [connect with each other](#).

Our Promise

Building a **Culture of Well-Being** not only means healthier and happier people; it also means a better and more productive workforce and a more vibrant economy.

- Sustainable Community Vitality
- Civic Pride and Economic Development
- Improved Well-Being
- More Productive, Less Costly Populations

Measurement and Value

- 1 We measure risk reduction with the Gallup Well-Being Index® and survey elements tied to overall well-being improvement.
- 2 Improvement in Community and Organizational metrics as prioritized and reported by the community.
- 3 Enhanced community brand and marketing value associated with billions of positive media impressions and thousands of published stories.

Riverside Challenges

Riverside faces widely-known, seemingly intractable, and significant challenges to well-being:

- Strong **car-dependency**, with limited convenient public transit and challenges around ridership
- Environmental** issues with air and water quality
- Limited supply of **affordable, diverse housing**
- Limited walkability** outside of select neighborhoods
- High concentration of fast food and convenience stores selling **junk food**

According to Gallup:

1 in 2 Riverside residents are struggling with their health

1 in 2 Report they are not proud of their community

1 in 2 are experiencing regular financial stress

These well-being shortcomings are costing countless billions in **lost productivity**, **absenteeism**, and **healthcare costs**. Chronic diseases are costing the city billions of dollars in largely avoidable healthcare costs.

Over the next five years, Riverside could save about **\$468.8 million** with a coordinated comprehensive effort

Riverside Opportunities

We’ve identified the ways in which we can forge a pathway forward, creating true measurable steps towards transformation in Riverside.

- BUILT ENVIRONMENT**
- Update Street Design Guidelines and Standards
- Adopt Vision Zero Resolution and Implementation Strategy**
- Continue to Build on Investments in the Downtown Core
- Encourage Diversified Housing Development

- FOOD ENVIRONMENT**
- Building Riverside’s Next Gen Food Systems Infrastructure
- Strengthening Policies and Infrastructure for Hunger Relief System and Healthy Food Access
- Creating Healthy Food Policies at Key Sites
- Deploying Zoning to Improve Health

- PLACES**
- Achieve Blue Zones Approval:
- 50%** of Schools
- 10%** of Restaurants
- 25%** of Grocery Stores
- 25%** of the Workforce
- Partner with **Faith-Based Communities** in **Volunteer Programs**

- TOBACCO**
- Public Health Allies Value Relationships
- Trust Building and Trust-Maintaining
- More Innovative “Upstream,” Culturally Appropriate and Trauma-Informed Solutions for Serving Communities
- More Innovative Approaches to Promoting Prevention Education and Cessation

- ALCOHOL**
- Implement Additional Policy to Address and Mitigate Alcohol Abuse
- Develop Targeted and Impactful Communication to Raise Awareness about the Risks of Alcohol Abuse
- Utilize Data Analysis to Assess the Effectiveness of Interventions, Identify Trends, and Make Informed Decisions about Further Improvement

- PEOPLE**
- 15% of Community Participate in:
- Purpose Workshops
- Blue Zones curated Volunteer Program
- Take the Blue Zones Vitality Compass
- Join a Blue Zones “Moai”

Key Well-Being Measures for Riverside

1 in 2		1 in 4		3 in 5	3 in 10	7 in 10	
Do not eat sufficient fruits and vegetables	Have worried about money in the last week	Are not proud of their community	Do not have a good perception of their health	Do not feel safe and secure	Do not exercise at appropriate levels	Have a poor current life evaluation	Are obese or overweight

BLUE ZONES PROJECT RESULTS

- Blue Zones Project Fort Worth was featured in more than 2,500 news stories including TODAY Show, The New York Times, and NBC Nightly News
- Smoking declined by 31% in Fort Worth and exercise increased by 15%

- Fort Worth moved from 185th to 31st in nation for healthiest city rankings since launch of Blue Zones Project Fort Worth
- 68% drop in childhood obesity rates in elementary schools in Redondo Beach, CA

- Collier County heart disease deaths dropped by 8.1% since launch of Blue Zones Project SW Florida and life expectancy improved to the highest in the nation
- NCH Healthcare System in Florida showed a 54% decrease in self-insured healthcare claims, saving \$27 million over 4 years

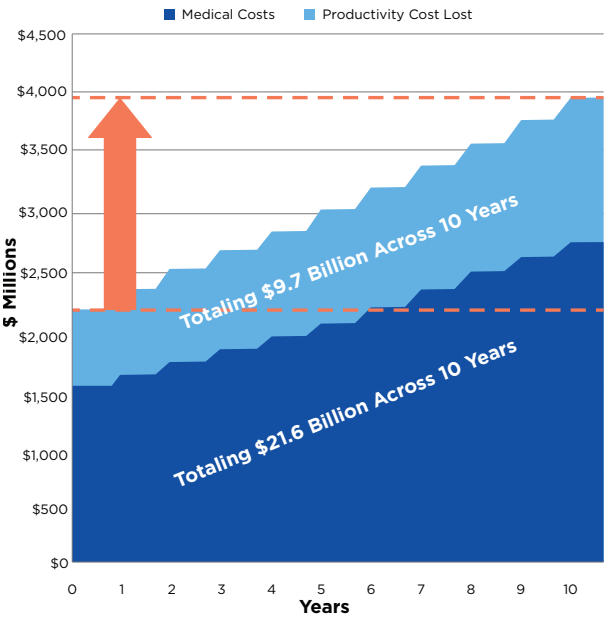
Cost of Doing Nothing

The current well-being trends for Riverside create a high price for doing nothing differently

Blue Zones estimates that without transformation, the annual medical and productivity costs will increase annually by **\$222 million** over the next decade.

Over the next decade, Riverside will incur a cumulative burden of **\$3.1 billion** more in medical costs and **\$1.4 billion** more in lost workforce productivity.

Medical and Productivity Cost Projections Absent Intervention for Ages 18 and Up



QUINTILE RANKING				
First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>				
Purpose				
Social				
Financial				
Community				
Physical				
California	22 nd	10 th	27 th	39 th
Riverside City	23 rd	50 th	115 th	151 st

Creating Value for Riverside

Over the next decade, the impact of a Blue Zones Project transformation that includes three designated transformation areas and county-wide efforts around people, places, and policy can result in:

- Overall value includes:
- ✔

Projected Medical Cost Savings of **~\$164.7M**

✔

Reductions in projected workforce lost productivity of **~\$228.9M over the next decade**

✔

Projected **~\$159 average annual per capita medical savings and productivity improvement value** for the adult population over the next decade
- ✔

Approximately \$75.2M in direct and indirect **benefits to the regional economy**

✔

Billions of expected **positive media** and brand impressions

✔

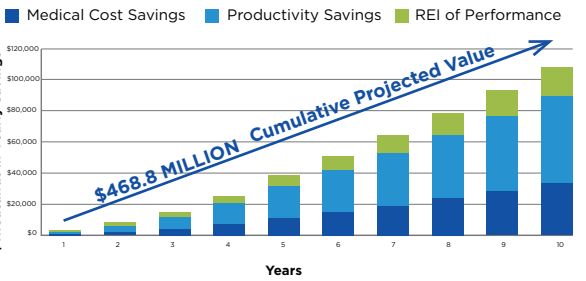
Additional related follow-on **community grants, gifts, and investments**

✔

Cumulative total **value of over \$468.8 million** for Riverside area

Through a Blue Zones Transformation, Riverside has an opportunity to change not only individual lives but the entire course of health and vitality of the community today and for future generations.

Medical	Productivity	Regional Economic
\$164.7 million	\$228.9 million	\$75.2 million



Measuring the Impact of Well-Being

Research demonstrates the link between well-being, medical costs, and job performance

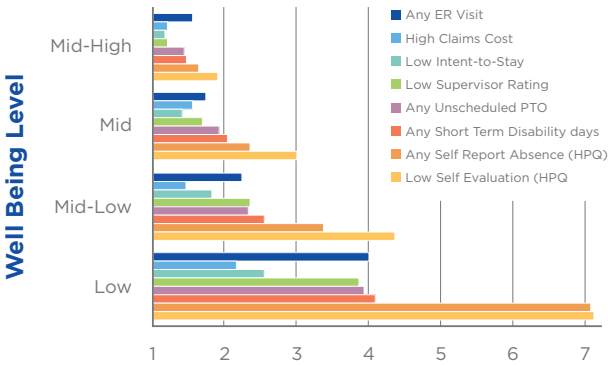
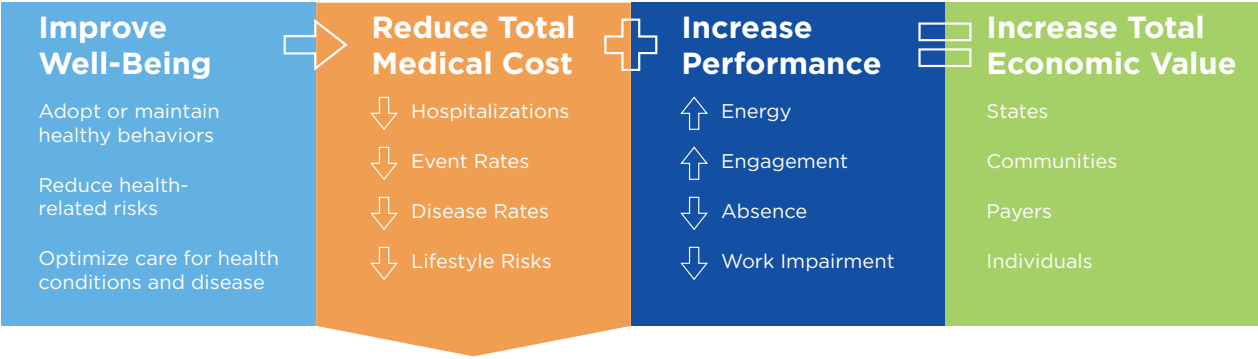
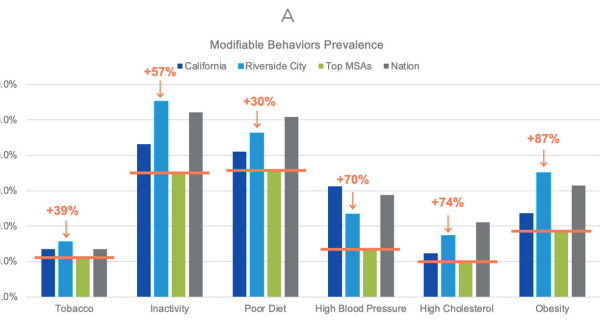
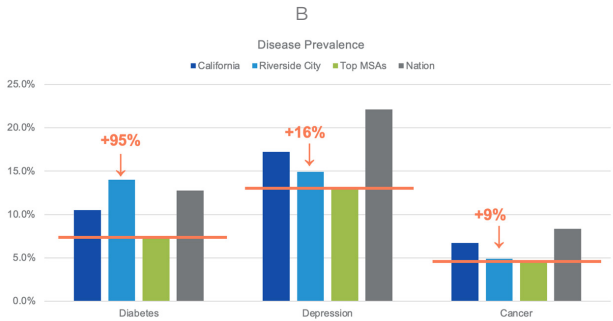


Figure adapted from: Overall Well-being as a Predictor of Healthcare, Productivity and Retention Outcomes in a Large Employer. Population Health Management, 2013.



Riverside has a number of challenges in the risk profile of the population. Obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol are 87%, 70%, and 74% higher (respectively) as compared to the benchmark MSAs in the U.S. Additionally, inactivity, poor diet, and tobacco use are all higher than the benchmark MSAs by 30%, or more. Disease prevalence rates in diabetes, depression, and cancer exceed that of the benchmark MSAs.



Everyone Benefits

Deepen brand equity and differentiate in a competitive market, accelerate reach, and expand total media impressions, create trust and legacy of bettering your community, public recognition at community events, and national and regional recognition.

Benefits to City and County:

- Boost economic vitality
- Attract new businesses
- Increase property values
- Generate new housing starts
- Attract grants, awards, gifts, and funding

Benefits to Large Employers:

- Improve productivity
- Lower healthcare costs
- Reduce turnover rates
- Improve employee engagement and satisfaction
- Attract skilled workforce

Benefits to Health Insurers:

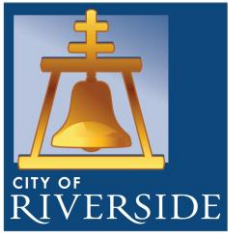
- Sustainably lower healthcare costs
- Improve employee well-being and productivity
- Improve employee and customer engagement and satisfaction
- Position company as leader in preventative health
- Elevate brand perception and media exposure

Benefits to Non-Profit Organizations:

- Accelerate community reach and awareness
- Attract grants and awards
- Guide Blue Zones work by sitting on leadership committees
- Position organization as innovator and leader in community
- Magnify impact by joining inclusive movement in community

Benefits to Health Systems:

- Join with partners to create an accountable community health model
- Position brand as trusted partner for health and well-being with consumers
- Decrease prevalence and incidence of chronic disease
- Lead with innovation to meet highest needs
- Help people live better, longer



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Launches “Blue Zones” Project to Increase Public Health and Longevity in Arlanza Neighborhood

Partnership with the Office of the Governor’s California Volunteers seeks to build education, community mobilization, and projects around increased public health and longevity.

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside in partnership with Governor’s Office/California Volunteers has been awarded a \$1 million “Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors” grant to develop a resident-led, two-year effort in the Arlanza neighborhood to address local health and sustainability concerns and potentially position the area for future competitive sustainability funding.

The goal is to empower residents in understanding and making lasting changes in their lives and their community. Resident education and community projects in areas of connectivity, nutrition, movement, and climate will help Arlanza residents learn how to achieve greater longevity and wellbeing.

The City worked with community partners Riverside Community Health Foundation and Healthy Leaders Thriving Cities/Love Riverside to secure the Statewide competitive funding. Five sub-neighborhoods in the greater Arlanza area will develop projects leading to a resident driven local “community action plan” with the goals of connecting neighbors, increasing volunteerism, and advocating for greater public health and sustainability within their neighborhood. The community planning associated with this project also will position the neighborhood for more grant funding.

“Living longer and happier lives should be a goal for all residents,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “This is an opportunity for a new generation of Arlanza residents to enjoy a healthier community”

Blue Zones are communities identified as having populations living measurably longer, happier lives with lower rates of chronic diseases and a higher-than-average quality of life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, life expectancy for Americans averaged 77.5 years in 2022. But this year, over 70,000 Americans have reached their 100th birthday. The Arlanza project will feature local programs and projects inspired by the examples set by residents with of high life longevity.

“This is a great win for the Arlanza neighborhood,” said Councilmember Jim Perry, who represents a portion of the area. “It’s community investment, but on a human scale, with a project that impacts issues critical to sustainability in Riverside.”

The City of Riverside has been a part of the greater Riverside County Blue Zones effort since the City Council voted on Dec. 12 to join. The potential value created for the City includes modified behaviors, decreased instances of disease, medical cost savings, productivity savings and increased regional economic performance. The City Council’s Strategic Plan priorities align well with the Blue Zones effort, most notably the priority on Community Well-Being for Riverside residents.

“We are excited for what this means for the greater Arlanza community,” said Councilmember Steve Hemenway, who also represents the area. “Not only will this build community, empower residents, and strengthen neighborhoods, it will also position the area to be more competitive for grants to complete even more projects in the future.”

More information can be found at: <https://www.californiavolunteers.ca.gov/>